U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO 81641

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2005-012-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): COC-7868

PROJECT NAME: APD Well # CSF 14C-13-4S-104

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado
T. 4S, R.104 W
Sec. 13, NE¼NW¼

APPLICANT: Evergreen Operating Corporation

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Proposed Action: The applicant proposes to perform the following actions:
Construct access road approx. 150'x 40' ROW (0.14 ac.), construct well pad 250'x 300' (1.72 ac.), drill well, and install two buried pipelines (4" polyethylene water & 4" steel hydrocarbon) in same trench 25'x 40' additional ROW (0.02 ac) parallel to access road. The water pipelines will dead end pending further development. Total surface disturbance on BLM would be approx. 1.88 acres.

Road will be crowned and ditched with a 15' running surface. Top soil and brush will be piled beside the road. No culvert, vehicle turn out, gate, or cattleguard is needed. All production facilities will be painted Juniper Green, except for OSHA parts. Stacks and vents will be built to discourage nesting or perching.

Water will be trucked from a private source in Rangely or Bonanza. No pit liner is planned at this time. Gravel, if needed, will be bought from an existing commercial site. Reserve pit will be fenced live stock tight on three sides with woven wire topped with barbed wire. The fourth side will be fenced the same when drilling is completed. At least 2' of freeboard will be maintained in the reserve pit. The fence will be kept in good repair while the pit dries. Flare pit fluids will drain via trench to the reserve pit. All trash will be placed in a portable trash cage. Camp trailers will be on location for the company man, tool pusher, and mud logger.

Reclamation starts once the reserve pit is dry. The road and well site will be contoured to a natural shape, topsoil and brush spread evenly over disturbed areas, and disturbed areas ripped or

harrowed. Seeding will be done in accordance with BLM stipulations. Seed bag tag will be kept. Road will be blocked. If the well is a producer, then the reserve pit and any other areas not needed for work over rigs will be reclaimed as described.

No Action Alternative: No additional environmental impacts would occur.

NEED FOR THE ACTION: To respond to request by applicant to exercise lease rights and develop potential hydrocarbon reserves.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: Pages 2-49 thru 2-52

Decision Language: "To make public lands available for the siting of public and private facilities through the issuance of applicable land use authorizations, in a manner that provides for reasonable protection of other resource values."

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH: In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: The entire White River RA has been designated as either attainment or unclassified for all pollutants, and most of the area has been designated prevention of significant deterioration (PSD) class II.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would result in short term, local impacts to air quality during construction, from fugitive dust being blown into the air.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Under the no action alternative, there would be no adverse affects on air quality.

Mitigation: Require dust abatement measures in the authorizing document.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed well pad has been inventoried at the Class III (100% pedestrian) level (Montgomery 2001, Compliance Dated 12/12/2001) with no cultural resources identified in the well pad inventory area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed well pad location will not impact any known cultural resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to cultural resourced under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: 1. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: The vegetation type on site is a bottom sage/greasewood. The bottom sage/greasewood community has deep soils and contains sagebrush, greasewood, blue grama, and cheatgrass.

Several noxious weed species have been found in the area including Russian and spotted knapweed, bull and musk thistle, hoary cress and cheatgrass. The outbreaks of knapweed were on well pads and were probably transported on site by construction equipment or support vehicles. All of the sites found have been treated and controlled.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Using the proposed seed mix should establish quickly and stabilize soils. The seed mix contains non-native species and these are recommended because of the harsh environmental conditions. The recommended species have not been shown to hybridize with adjacent plant species or to move offsite. Controlling noxious weeds as described by mitigation would prevent noxious weed species from moving off-site and establishing in the adjacent plant communities.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts.

Mitigation: From the Whiter River ROD/RMP of 1997, Appendix B, Application of herbicides must be under field supervision of an EPA-certified pesticide applicator. Herbicides must be registered by the EPA and application proposals must be approved by the BLM.

Seed species used in reseeding disturbed areas will be based on the seed mixes identified in table B1 and B2. These mixes are based on range sites as determined by soils. Use Standard Seed Mix #2 listed below.

Table B-1. Standard Seed Mixes

Seed Mix #	Species (Variety)	Lbs PLS/ Acre	Range sites
2	Western wheatgrass (Arriba) Pubescent wheatgrass (Luna) Russian wildrye (Bozoisky) Crested wheatgrass (Fairway/Ephraim) Yellow sweetclover (Madrid) Fourwing saltbush (Wytana/Rincon) Alternates: Winterfat	3 2 2 2 0.5 2	Alkaline Slopes, Clayey Foothills, Clayey Slopes, Claypan, Mountain Shale

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: A number of migratory birds nest during the months of May, June and July within the basin big sagebrush/greasewood, and low density, younger seral pinyon-juniper communities found in the vicinity of the proposed well pad. Bird populations associated with these communities that have a higher conservation interest (i.e., Rocky Mountain Bird

Observatory, Partners in Flight program) include Brewer's sparrow and green-tailed towhee (shrublands) and black-throated gray warbler and gray flycatcher (woodlands). There are no specialized or narrowly endemic species known to occupy the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Drilling and completion operations on this well would be finalized before mid-May and well before the arrival of migratory birds and initiation of their nest activities. The proposed action would have no influence on the nesting activity of migratory birds.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no action authorized that would potentially influence nesting activity of migratory birds.

Mitigation: None.

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE ANIMAL SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Affected Environment: No animals listed, proposed, or candidate to the Endangered Species Act or those categorized by the BLM as sensitive are known to inhabit or derive important benefit from the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on special status species or associated habitats.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no action authorized that would have potential to influence special status species or their habitats.

Mitigation: None.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: Because there are no special status species inhabiting or deriving benefit from the project area, application of the Public Land Health Standards for T&E animals are not applicable to this action. Implementation of either the proposed or no-action alternatives would have no influence on the status of land health standards applied to off-site lands.

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: *Affected Environment*: There are no known hazardous or other solid wastes on the subject lands. No hazardous materials are known to have been used, stored or disposed of at this site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: No listed or extremely hazardous materials in excess of threshold quantities are proposed for use in this project. While commercial preparations of fuels and lubricants proposed for use may contain some hazardous constituents,

they would be stored, used and transported in a manner consistent with applicable laws, and the generation of hazardous wastes would not be anticipated.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No hazardous or other solid wastes would be generated under the no-action alternative.

Mitigation: The operator shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by this project.

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Affected Environment: The proposed action is in the West Evacuation Creek drainage which is tributary to Evacuation Creek. Drainages are tributary to the White River in Utah. As required by the Clean Water Act, the state of Utah has designated the White River from the Colorado-Utah state line to its confluence with the Green River as fully supporting of all of its beneficial use classifications. This stream reach=s beneficial use classifications are: Recreation and Aesthetics, 2B; and Aquatic Life Use Support, 3C. Four parameters have been listed on the Numeric Criteria for this reach. These are: dissolved oxygen, 5.5 mg/l; pH, 6.5-9.0; maximum Fecal Coliform, 2000/100mL; and maximum Total Coliform, 5000/100mL. For these parameters, a fully supporting rating indicated the criterion was not exceeded in more than 10% of the samples collected. While the highest level of water quality protection does not apply to these waters, they are protected for their existing uses and from further degradation as a result of non-point source (sediment) pollution. Efforts need to be made to keep sediment from leaving the site.

Water quality data is not available for these upper reaches of West Evacuation Creek. This segment of stream is considered to be intermittent, which means it flows in direct response to winter snow melt and late summer/fall rainstorms and ground water discharge (perennial flows are only on segments of the drainage) expressed at the surface. Water quality of precipitation is considered to be of good quality, but can be high is sediment depending on the magnitude and duration of the storm event. The quality of ground water is dependent on the formation in which it flows through. In this area it is the Mesaverde which can be of very good quality. Dissolved-solids concentration of the ground water ranges from about 300 to 2,500mg/L but is normally less than 1,000 mg/L.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Fragile watersheds that have very high erosion potential (i.e. Evacuation Creek) are frequently high in salts and can contribute to increased salinity loads to the White River and the Colorado River Basin. Annual runoff is dynamic and dependent on some aspects we control, such as the amount of vegetation retained for watershed protection and vegetation density. Depleting this vegetation cover needed to protect watersheds from raindrop impact and runoff could cause long-term erosion and water quality problems for Evacuation Creek and on downstream. Best management practices (BMPs) are needed to re-establish a protective vegetative cover and to collect sediment during runoff events.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Impacts from the no-action alternative are not anticipated.

Mitigation: Apply the following Conditions of Approval, (BMPs) listed in Appendix B, in the White River ROD/RMP to help minimize surface disturbing impacts:

4. When preparing the site, all suitable topsoil should be stripped from the surface of the location and stockpiled for reclamation. For the interim, if the topsoil is stockpiled on slopes exceeding five percent, construct a berm or trench below the stockpile. Once construction is completed, reclaim as much of the pad that is not needed for maintenance of the well facility.

6. All sediment control structures or disposal pits will be designed to contain a 100-year, 6-hour storm event. Storage volumes within these structures will have a design life of 25 years.

8. All activity shall cease when soils or road surfaces become saturated to a depth of three inches unless otherwise approved by the Authorized Officer.

35. Eliminate undesirable berms that retard normal surface runoff. Fill material associated with construction of this project shall not be deposited in two ephemeral draws adjacent to this well.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: Evacuation Creek is well within the standards set by the State. The proposed action will not affect the standards.

WETLANDS AND RIPARIAN ZONES (includes a finding on Standard 2)

Affected Environment: The proposed location lies near the intersection of Evacuation Creek and Whiskey Creeks. Both channels are ephemeral and neither support vegetation with riparian character. The proposed pad is separated from these channels by 400-500 feet of valley terrace.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Excessive sediment deposited in these relatively gentle gradient channel systems can destabilize banks and meander patterns and adversely influence both vertical and lateral channel stability. With the incorporation of applicable Best Management Practices for soil and water management, there is no reasonable likelihood that pad development would contribute substantively to the volume of sediments entering the channels. The proposed project is not expected to have any discernible effect on channel function or the condition of facultative vegetation in the Evacuation or Whiskey Creek channels.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no action authorized that would have any potential influence on riparian function or condition.

Mitigation: None.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems: The no-action and proposed action, as conditioned, would have a no effective influence on the function of these

largely unvegetated, ephemeral channels, and as such would be consistent with continued meeting of the Land Health Standard for riparian systems.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:

No ACEC's, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, Wilderness, or Wild and Scenic Rivers, threatened, endangered or sensitive plants exist within the area affected by the proposed action. For threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species Public Land Health Standard is not applicable since neither the proposed nor the no-action alternative would have any influence on populations of, or habitats potentially occupied by, special status plants. There are also no Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action.

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The following elements **must** be addressed due to the involvement of Standards for Public Land Health:

SOILS (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Affected Environment: The proposed action is in soil mapping unit #95, Uffens loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes. This deep, well drained soil is on fans and low terraces. It formed in calcareous, saline alluvium. Areas are irregular in shape and are 20 to 250 acres in size. The native vegetation is mainly salt-tolerant shrubs and grasses. Elevation is 5,100 to 5,800 feet. The average annual precipitation is 7 to 10 inches, the average annual air temperature is 45 to 50 degrees F, and the average frost-free period is 105 to 130 days.

Typically, the surface layer is very pale brown loam 2 inches thick. The upper 6 inches of the subsoil is light yellowish brown clay loam, and the lower 11 inches is very pale brown clay loam. The upper 5 inches of the substratum is light yellowish brown loam, and the next 4 inches is light yellowish brown loam, and the lower part to a depth of 60 inches or more is very pale brown loam. Permeability of this Uffens soil is moderately slow. Available water capacity is moderate. Effective rooting depth is 60 inches or more. Runoff is slow, and the hazard of water erosion is moderate. The soil is calcareous throughout.

This map unit is in capability subclasses IVs, irrigated, and VIIs, nonirrigated. It is in Alkaline Slopes range site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: General impacts associated with oil and gas and road development include but are not limited to, loss of topsoil, soil compaction and possible increase in sediment loads to the White River. The primary surface-disturbing impact would be a potential increase in sediment transport from runoff events after the protective vegetative cover has been removed. None of the proposed action is in areas delineated as CSU-1 in the White River ROD/RMP.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Impacts are not anticipated from not permitting the proposed action.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is recommended above what is already in the proposed action.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils: The soil associated with the proposed action is and will continue to be within the criteria of standard 1 for Public Land Health Standards. The proposed action will not affect the soils ability to meet the standard.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The vegetation types are a bottom sage/greasewood. The bottom sage/greasewood community (1.2 acres) has deep soils and contains sagebrush, greasewood, blue grama, and cheatgrass. Generally these bottom sites are in low-seral stage relative to the climax communities. This is the result of past livestock grazing practices which were through the growing season.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Vegetation on the three described vegetation types would be removed during the life of the project. Following reclamation all these sites would be stabilized by reclamation within three years and would then revert back to the native vegetation. On the sagebrush associations it is expected that sage would be dominant within 20 years. On the pinyon /juniper communities are expected to have seedling pinyon and juniper within 30 years and develop old growth characteristics in between 150 and 300 years.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial)*:* The sagebrush communities in the bottoms do not meet the standards for plant health. There is an abundance of cheatgrass which prevents growth during a portion of the season. The cheatgrass dominated areas do not meet the standard. These concerns are being addressed in the Rangeland Permit Renewal.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The Evacuation and Whiskey Creek channels are ephemeral and are incapable of supporting aquatic life.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on aquatic habitats.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no action authorized that would have any potential influence on aquatic function or condition.

Mitigation: None.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): The proposed and no-action alternatives would have no conceivable influence on aquatic habitats and, as such, there is no basis for applying or evaluating the status of applicable Public Land health standards for aquatic communities.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The proposed action is encompassed by the upper elevational extent of deer and elk winter ranges. Big game use is most prevalent on these basin big sagebrush-greasewood valleys during the transition periods of mid-fall through mid-winter and again during the mid to later spring months.

The uplands surrounding the pad location are composed of submature and encroaching pinyon-juniper woodlands that have no effective utility as raptor nest habitat.

Nongame bird abundance and composition associated with the project area's woodland and shrubland habitats are considered representative and complete with no obvious deficiencies in composition. Small mammal populations and distribution are poorly documented; however, the species potentially occurring on these sites are widely distributed throughout the State and the Great Basin or Rocky Mountain regions. All of these upland species display broad ecological tolerance and are documented from habitats ranging from foothill to alpine sites. No narrowly distributed or highly specialized species or sub-specific populations are known to occur in the Evacuation Creek drainage.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would involve the longer term occupation of about 2 acres of basin big sagebrush-greasewood community. The dominant components of this shrubland community offer virtually no woody forage value--the bottomlands are used almost exclusively as a source of herbaceous vegetation during big game spring and fall transition periods. Although reduction in the available forage base is incremental, the pre-reclaimed loss is considered discountable, particularly since the utility of these foraging types in the Evacuation Creek corridor are reduced by the proximity of the adjacent county road.

The longer term removal of up to 2 acres in the West Evacuation Creek bottomlands is negligible and would have no conceivable influence on the abundance or distribution of nongame birds or mammals.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no action authorized that would have any influence on terrestrial wildlife populations or habitat.

Mitigation: None.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): The project area presently meets the public land health standards for terrestrial animal communities. The proposed action, as conditioned, would not jeopardize the viability of any animal population. It would have negligible consequence on terrestrial habitat condition, utility, and/or function, and would have no discernible effect on animal abundance or distribution at any landscape scale. Lands affected by the no-action or proposed action, as conditioned, would continue to meet the land health standard for big game, raptor, and nongame animals.

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, only those brought forward for analysis will be addressed further.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access and Transportation			X
Cadastral Survey	X		
Fire Management	X		
Forest Management	X		
Geology and Minerals			X
Hydrology/Water Rights	X		
Law Enforcement		X	
Noise		X	
Paleontology			X
Rangeland Management		X	
Realty Authorizations	X		
Recreation			X
Socio-Economics		X	
Visual Resources			X
Wild Horses	X		

ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION

Affected Environment: Proposed action will impact Rio Blanco County road 25 and is located in an area where travel is limited to existing routes as identified in the White River Resource Area RMP of 1997.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Proposed action will likely cause an increase in traffic and heavy vehicle traffic. An increase in traffic may impact road surface quality. No new public access will be created with this action.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None.

Mitigation: None.

GEOLOGY AND MINERALS

Affected Environment: The surface geologic formation of the well location 14C-13 is alluvial. Evergreen's targeted zone is in the Mesaverde. During drilling potential water, coal and gas zones will be encountered from surface to the targeted zone. These wells are located on existing Federal Oil and Gas lease COC-7868.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Cementing procedure of the proposed actions isolates the formations and will prevent the migration of gas, water, and oil between formations. The coal zones located the Mesaverde will also be isolated during this procedure. Development of these wells will deplete the natural gas resources in the targeted formation.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: The coal bed natural gas resources in the targeted zones will not be recovered at this time.

Mitigation: None

PALEONTOLOGY

Affected Environment: The proposed well pad location is located in an area mapped as the Mesa Verde Formation (Tweto 1979) which the BLM has classified as a Condition I formation meaning it is a known producer of scientifically important fossil resources.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: If it should be come necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formation to construct the access road, level the well pad or excavate the reserve/blooie pit there is a potential to impact scientifically important fossil resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to fossil resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: 1. If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formation to construct the road, level the well pad or excavate the reserve/blooie pit a paleontological monitor shall be required.

2. If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during project activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials, and contact the authorized officer (AO). The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best option for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

RECREATION

Affected Environment: The proposed action occurs within the White River Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA). BLM custodially manages the ERMA to provide for unstructured recreation activities such as hunting, dispersed camping, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and off-highway vehicle use.

The project area and the surrounding Evacuation Creek area most resemble a Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class of Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM). SPM recreation setting is typically characterized by a natural appearing environment with few administrative controls, low interaction between users but evidence of other users may be present. SPM recreation experience is characterized by a high probability of isolation from the sights and sounds of humans that offers an environment that offers challenge and risk.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The public will lose approximately 2 acres of dispersed recreation potential while wells are in operation. The public will most likely not recreate in the vicinity of these facilities and will be dispersed elsewhere. If action coincides with hunting seasons (September through November) it will most likely disrupt the experience sought by those recreationists.

With the introduction of new well pads and roads, an increase of traffic could be expected increasing the likelihood of human interactions, the sights and sounds associated with the human environment and a less naturally appearing environment.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No loss of dispersed recreation potential and no impact to hunting recreationists.

Mitigation: None.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed action is located within an area with a VRM III classification. The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would be located on a relatively flat area of predominant greasewood vegetation that is adjacent to an existing road in Evacuation Creek, which is the route that would be most likely traveled by a casual observer. The proposed action would be located near the bottom of the drainage and would be visible from this road for approximately ½ mile of travel and approximately one minute of time. The proposed action would not dominate the view of the casual observer since

there is a backdrop of ridges with canyons and bluffs on either side of the road. By utilizing low profile production facilities and painting all facilities Juniper Green as stated in APD to mimic the background of woody vegetation, the level of change to the characteristic surrounding landscape would be low. The objective of the VRM III classification would be retained.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no additional environmental impacts from the no action alternative.

Mitigation: Use low profile production facilities and paint all production facilities as stated in APD.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: The Cumulative impacts of oil and gas developments in this area were analyzed in the White River RMP, based on a reasonable foreseeable development scenario which assumed a total of ten acres per well/pad. This action would involve fewer acres, and the resultant cumulative impacts would be consistent with that analysis.

REFERENCED CITED:

Montgomery, Jacki A.
2001 Cultural Resource Inventory of Bonneville Fuel Corporations 7 Well Locations Near Davis Canyon Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Montgomery Archaeological Consultants, Moab, Utah.

Tweto, Odgen
1979 Geologic Map of Colorado. United States Geologic Survey, Department of the Interior, Reston, Virginia.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED: None

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Caroline Hollowed	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	Air Quality
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
Michael Selle	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources Paleontological Resources
Robert Fowler	Forester	Invasive, Non-Native Species
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Wildlife
Bo Brown	Hazmat Collateral	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
Caroline Hollowed	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	Water Quality, Surface and Ground Hydrology and Water Rights
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Wilderness
Caroline Hollowed	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	Soils
Robert Fowler	Forester	Vegetation
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Terrestrial and Aquatic
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Access and Transportation
Ken Holsinger	Natural Resource Specialist	Fire Management
Robert Fowler	Forester	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Robert Fowler	Forester	Rangeland Management
Linda Jones	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation
Keith Whitaker	Natural Resource Specialist	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	Natural Resource Specialist	Wild Horses

Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (FONSI/DR)

CO-110-2005-012-EA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE: The environmental assessment and analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures (listed below) result in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

DECISION/RATIONALE: It is my decision to approve the development of Well # CSF 14C-13-4S-104 as described in the proposed action, with mitigation listed below. This development, with mitigation, is consistent with the decisions in the White River ROD/RMP, and environmental impacts will be minimal.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

1. Require dust abatement measures in the authorizing document.

2. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

3. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

4. From the Whiter River ROD/RMP of 1997, Appendix B, Application of herbicides must be under field supervision of an EPA-certified pesticide applicator. Herbicides must be registered by the EPA and application proposals must be approved by the BLM.

5. Seed species used in reseeding disturbed areas will be based on the seed mixes identified in table B1 and B2. These mixes are based on range sites as determined by soils. Use Standard Seed Mix #2 listed below.

Table B-1. Standard Seed Mixes

Seed Mix #	Species (Variety)	Lbs PLS/ Acre	Range sites
2	Western wheatgrass (Arriba) Pubescent wheatgrass (Luna) Russian wildrye (Bozoisky) Crested wheatgrass (Fairway/Ephraim) Yellow sweetclover (Madrid) Fourwing saltbush (Wytana/Rincon) Alternates: Winterfat	3 2 2 2 0.5 2	Alkaline Slopes, Clayey Foothills, Clayey Slopes, Claypan, Mountain Shale

6. The operator shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by this project.

7. When preparing the site, all suitable topsoil should be stripped from the surface of the location and stockpiled for reclamation. For the interim, if the topsoil is stockpiled on slopes exceeding five percent, construct a berm or trench below the stockpile. Once construction is completed, reclaim as much of the pad that is not needed for maintenance of the well facility.

8. All sediment control structures or disposal pits will be designed to contain a 100-year, 6-hour storm event. Storage volumes within these structures will have a design life of 25 years.

9. All activity shall cease when soils or road surfaces become saturated to a depth of three inches unless otherwise approved by the Authorized Officer.

10. Eliminate undesirable berms that retard normal surface runoff. Fill material associated with construction of this project shall not be deposited in two ephemeral draws adjacent to this well.

11. If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formation to construct the road, level the well pad or excavate the reserve/blooie pit a paleontological monitor shall be required.

12. If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during project activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials, and contact the

authorized officer (AO). The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best option for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

13. Use low profile production facilities and paint all production facilities as stated in APD.

NAME OF PREPARER: Keith Whitaker

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline Hollowed

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: Kent E. Walter
Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 12/17/04

ATTACHMENTS: Location Map of the Proposed Action.

Location of Proposed Action
CO-110-2005-012-EA